

The following statement was received from the California Department of Aging (CDA) in response to concerns raised by a community-based refugee services provider at the Elderly Refugee Services Symposium (ERSS) held in Sacramento in February 2001.

Background

At the ERSS, the provider shared that they had responded to a Request for Proposal (RFP) from the CDA for Long Term Care (LTC) Innovation Grants funding and that their proposal had been unsuccessful because of the low marks it received. The category they were rated low in was the financial category, specifically, in demonstrating their organization's financial stability during periods of disruption. They further indicated that they were not informed up front that to receive the higher scores in this category they would have had to have demonstrated a reserve of \$ 90,000. The provider questioned how this figure was arrived at and noted that it was an unrealistic amount to expect of most community-based organizations (CBOs). The result would be to severely limit CBOs from receiving future CDA funding.

In light of the broad implications of this question and our partnership with the CDA, the Refugee Programs Branch offered to pursue the matter with the CDA. This is the response provided.

Response (received 7/10/2001 - from Shelly Thomas, Chief, Office of Planning, Policy and Program Development)

All proposers responding to the CDA Requests for Proposal for the Long-Term Care innovation grants were required to demonstrate financial stability for the proposed project. Each proposer was required to submit a complete set of audited financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years. For organizations that had been operational for less than three years, audited financial statements must have been submitted for each year in operation. If audited financial statements did not exist, evidence of financial stability and commitment was to be provided. Proposers were required to address how the proposer's organization would assure continued operation in periods of cash flow disruptions.

Category 7 of the RFP – Financial qualifications- requirements included: Describes how organizations will assure continued operation in periods of cash flow disruptions (i.e., late billings, delay in approval of the State budget). The evaluation Criteria included; proposer has demonstrated financial stability for the proposed project. This section was worth a total of 35 points.

All proposals received for the LTC Innovation Grants program were read and evaluated using the above criteria.

Conclusion

While understandably this response does not affect the outcome of the particular grant program, it was beneficial to raise the issue with CDA that many refugee service providers may not have reserves of this size. And that in future RFPs, special consideration should be given to recognize refugee service providers as they possess unique skills in working with a population currently under-represented in mainstream elderly programs.